FRAMING OSWALD IN MEXICO

By Theresa Seay

As is all too typical in the JFK case, little can be determined with certainty about Lee Oswald's supposed trip to Mexico in September of 1963. Loose ends abound, witness testimony is contradictory, leads are left dangling, and the hard evidence is suspect. Oswald's Mexico sojourn, however, painted him as a communist sympathizer and Castro supporter and connected him to the KGB's assassination squads via Valeriy Kostikov of the Soviet Embassay. These associations helped to convince millions of Americans that Lee Oswald was indeed guilty of killing President Kennedy.

The "proof" that Lee Oswald was ever in Mexico consists of his signature on a hotel register, his signature and photographs on a Cuban transit visa application, and bus ticket stubs for the trip. Other indications show only that a person calling himself Oswald appeared several times at the Cuban Embassay as well as at the Russian one, the object being to go to Cuba.

The CIA offered "proof" of Oswald's embassy visits by presenting photographs of "Lee Henry Oswald", but shots showed a man about 35, with a sturdy build, about six feet tall, with a receding hairline- a portrait radically different from the real Lee Oswald. Though "Oswald" visited the embassies at least 5 times, no authentic picture of Lee Oswald was ever produced although the CIA maintained camera surveillance. The CIA claimed that the camera had broken down at that strategic time and that one of the days was a Saturday when the cameras weren't on.

Sylvia Duran, the Consul's assistant, remembered that "Oswald" took the application out to have photos made. She does not remember whether or not he signed the form in her presence, leaving open the distinct possibility of forgery. The photos were NOT made at any local establishment, indicating that "Oswald" had brought pictures of the real Oswald with him to affix to the forms. Sylvia Duran was arrested at the behest of the CIA after Kennedy's assassination and was released after she identified Oswald as the man who visited the Cuban embassy.

Anthony Summers arranged for her to see films of the real Lee Oswald in 1979 and, in his book *Conspiracy*, she said the man on the film was NOT like the man she saw in Mexico City. Oswald was 5 feet, 9.5 inches, while the embassy visitor was diminutive in size- about her height of 5 feet 3 inches. Cuban Consul Azcue also recollects a small man with blond hair, again unlike he real Oswald.

"Hard" evidence of photos and a signature on the visa application thus dissolves into mush. Also, a tape recording of a man calling himself Lee Oswald in a call to the Russian Embassay showed that he spoke Russian very poorly while Oswald spoke it fluently. FBI agents familiar with Oswald listened to the tape after November 22, 1963 and said it was NOT Lee Harvey Oswald's voice. The CIA obviously lied when it claimed to have "routinely" destroyed the tape before the assassination. Mark Lane in his new book *Plausible Denial* states that the Mexican CIA head at the time, David Atlee Phillips, confessed that "there is no evidence to show that Lee Harvey Oswald visited the Soviet Embassay" and that "there was never a photograph taken of Lee Harvey Oswald in Mexico City"! Why then do we still hear the contrary, tired, old tune?!

The hotel register presents serious problems and shows signs of tampering according to Jerry Rose in his article, "The Trip That Never Was:Oswald in Mexico." All names on the register for September 27, 1963 were written in the same hand, with one exception. Not surprisingly, the exception is Lee Harvey Oswald. The Hotel del Commercio explained this by saying that the clerk rewrote the names of all people staying over and only those who checked in that day wrote their own. So did only Oswald check in on the 27th? No! Eight other people also did, yet their signatures were NOT on that register- just Mr. Oswald's. For the following three days, Room 18's occupant was also listed in a unique writing as Lee Harvey, but that writing is different from that of September 27. More "hard" evidence disintegrates.

The bus trips also have peculiarities. Oswald, a former defector, received his passport in just 24 hours, contrary to all established practice. His tourist card number follows that of a known CIA veteran of 20 years, while "his" companion on the bus, Albert Osborne, alias John Bowen, claimed to be a missionary but his story didn't check out and just how he financed all his worldly travels was never established. Jim Marrs points out in his book *Crossfire* that Oswald used the name "Osborne" when ordering Fair Play for Cuba materials in New Orleans. Coincidence? The passenger list for the bus was taken by "investigators" and never returned. Was "Oswald" on it?

"THE HOTEL REGISTER PRESENTS SERIOUS PROBLEMS AND SHOWS SIGNS OF TAMPERING..... ALL NAMES WERE WRITTEN IN THE SAME HAND, WITH ONE EXCEPTION"

On the return trip, there was evidence of not one, but three modes of exit for "Oswald". Two buses have evidence of his travel,while a Department of State telegram, a copy of which is in my possession, has him leaving "by automobile". In short, all the so-called evidence is confusing and hardly a solid basis for any conclusions about who was really on the bus(es).

The definitive "proof" that Oswald took a round trip bus ride to Mexico City was found in September of 1964 when Marina providentially found bus ticket stubs in a Spanish language magazine along with a Mexico City TV program guide for that very week! Various teams of FBI agents had searched the motel rooms and gone over every scrap of paper and had found nothing of this kind, but when Priscilla Johnson McMillan arrived at Marina's rooms, the long missing ticket stubs so wanted by the Warren Commission were suddenly discovered! McMillan interviewed Oswald in Russia and her name was in Oswald's notebook along with a statement that she was "employed on a part time basis within the U.S. Embassay", a euphemism for CIA contract agents. Again, instead of solving riddles, this timely discovery just presents more of a puzzle.

What can be said conclusively is that Oswald just MIGHT have visited Mexico (although he was seen at Sylvia Odio's while supposedly on the bus), but that someone else impersonated him and visited the embassies, deliberately setting him up for post-assassination connections with the Cubans or Russians. This is plain evidence of conspiracy. We still wait for the Government of the United States to investigate this compelling proof of the framing of the real Lee Oswald, just two months before JFK's execution.

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